

23 APRIL 1976

Walters, Deputy Director of the CIA, Is Leaving

By PAUL HEALY

Washington, April 22 (News Bureau)—President Ford announced today that Lt. Gen. Vernon Walters, a Watergate figure and long-time friend of Richard Nixon, had submitted his resignation as deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Ford named E. Henry Knoche, a career CIA official, to replace Walters.

Ron Nessen, White House press secretary, said that Walters submitted the resignation when Ford appointed George Bush as CIA director last January, because the deputy director wanted to retire after 35 years' service with Army and because he thought Bush "wanted to build his own team." Nessen said Bush asked Walters to stay on for a while. Walters will

leave when his successor is confirmed by the Senate.

Walters, 59, native New Yorker, with a command of eight languages, found a place in the sun as an interpreter for Presidents Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson and Nixon at various summit meetings. Nixon

named him to the No. 2 CIA position in 1972.

Nessen insisted that Ford and Bush both had "a very high regard" for Walters. But reports persisted that the President had accepted Walters' three-month-old offer to resign as part of the Ford administration's reorganization of the intelligence community in the wake of govern-

ment investigations of United States espionage and surveillance policies and operations.

Walters' name popped up in the Watergate story when it was disclosed that H. R. Haldeman, then White House chief of staff, had asked Walters to tell L. Patrick Gray 3d, who was acting director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, to "stay the hell out of" any inquiry into the June 1972 burglary at the Democratic National headquarters.

Committee's headquarters. The pretext for the message to Gray was that such an inquiry might somehow be embarrassing to the

U.S. and thereby affect national security. This scheme was approved by Nixon, who regarded Walters as a loyalist.

Walters did pass on the Haldeman instructions to Gray, according to Walters' testimony in 1973 before the Senate Watergate committee.